Culture Change, Framing, and Equity

County Health Rankings

October 18, 2022
Methods

- **Focus Groups**: May/June 2020, December 2020, April 2021, September 2021, March 2022, July/August 2022

- **Culture Tracking Survey**: monthly August-December 2020; bi-monthly through June 2022; quarterly October 2022-

- **Cultural Models Interviews**: August/September 2020; Fall 2022 (upcoming)

- **Survey Experiments (frame testing)**: October/November 2022
Designed systems thinking is rising, but varies by group and issue
Different issues, differing dominance

Balance of dominance

Different issues, differing dominance

Health
individualism

Ecological and
systems thinking

Balance of dominance
Different issues, differing dominance

Health individualism

Ecological and systems thinking

Balance of dominance

Different issues, differing dominance

Health individualism

Ecological and systems thinking

Market naturalism/bootsraps

Economy as designed

Balance of dominance
Different issues, differing dominance

Health individualism  
Ecological and systems thinking

Market naturalism/bootsraps  
Economy as designed

Interpersonal model of racism  
Structural model of racism

Balance of dominance
Different issues, differing dominance

Health individualism

Ecological and systems thinking

Market naturalism/bootstraps

Economy as designed

Interpersonal model of racism

Structural model of racism

Balance of dominance

Advancing Equity — Existing Understandings and Mindsets
How do people understand the term “equity”?
Two Foundational Features of American Culture Provide Create Deep Challenges
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Narrative of the Self-Made Individual

– Outcomes and fates are assumed to be determined largely by our own actions and choices

Dehumanization of Black Americans

– Many Americans draw on assumptions that pathologize Black individuals, families, and communities
These Cultural Mindsets Shape Thinking about Health in Specific Ways

Focus on lifestyle choices — diet and exercise

Blame health disparities on lifestyle choices and culture
Alternative Mindsets Exist

What Surrounds Us Shapes Us — Ecological Modeling
Alternative Mindsets Exist

What Surrounds Us Shapes Us — Ecological Modeling

Systems Thinking on Healthcare, Food Systems

Systems Thinking on Economy, Racism
Framing Equity

What Not to Do

Don’t leave room for people to assume the problem lies with the people experiencing it.

What to Do

Attribute responsibility to systemic, structural, or policy-level factors.
**What Not to Do**

Don’t begin with numbers about poor health outcomes or “textbook definitions” of health equity.

**What to Do**

Lead with justice/fairness.

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**What Not to Do**

Don’t just talk about the problem.

Don’t stress individual behavior.

**What to Do**

Foreground collective solutions.
What Not to Do

Don’t talk about who experiences disparities without talking about how and why this happens—and how to address it.

What to Do

Move beyond assertion and description. Center explanation.

To advance health equity, should we make health the issue?
Thank you!